

invested with very arbitrary prerogatives. So long as the ruling classes of Greece and Rome retained some drops of northern blood, the influence of the general was limited by the subdivision of his functions, and the senate could maintain itself as the directing authority of the State in every province of activity except upon the battlefield. But with the passing of time the dictator overshadowed the senate, and Rome and Constantinople alike submitted to an oriental despotism. In northern Europe, on the other hand, kings have always been pressed to defend their authority against encroachment. They have been powerfully assisted by the influence of religious feelings. A king who was deified was in theory irresistible : and no arguments for limiting his authority could withstand a belief that he held his office by Divine right. Indeed, it was very probably the influence of religion that exalted the successful general into a hereditary king. Divinity which was instinct in the father would naturally descend to his son.

But religion has not always contented itself with the upholding of monarchy. The visioned ideas to which it appeals may affect men as strongly as the most serious or attractive of life's practical contingencies, and may be as awe-inspiring as the most absolute tyranny. When, at the fall of the Roman empire, men lost confidence in monarchy, the Church of Rome

stepped into the
breach. and during many centuries
attracted
more veneration than was accorded to
the most
august of sovereigns. Its influence was
least
impressive amongst the Scandinavian
and Teu-
tonic peoples : the ideas of their
preference were
practical. and it was first among
them that
religion. unable to maintain its
autocratic pre-
tensions. fell back to become a
guard for the